

GUIDELINE NO:3.4B
Wastewater Operator Licensing
August 2010**Guideline Title: Experience ‘as a Wastewater Operator’****PURPOSE**

To explain for **new/upgrade** licences:

- ✓ experience the ministry will consider as a substitution for ‘experience as an operator’ for the purpose of securing a Class II, III and IV licence (O. Reg. 129/04, Schedule 2, section 8 (2) paragraph 2)
- ✓ how the ministry calculate hours of experience ‘as an operator’; when part-time is considered full-time.

To explain for licence **renewal**:

- ✓ experience the ministry will consider as ‘related to’ experience as an operator in relation to licence renewal.

CONTEXT

To qualify for a Class I, II, III or IV operator’s licence, in addition to education and training, a person must have specific years of experience as an operator in the type of wastewater facility corresponding to the licence for which the individual is applying.

Experience as an operator would be experience performing the functions that need to be performed by a licenced operator. This includes ‘direct’ experience (i.e. ‘hands-on’- actually performing the function), or ‘indirect’ experience (i.e. directs and/or supervises operators on performing¹ operating functions; “indirect” experience would typically be obtained by a frontline supervisor who provides operational directions to other operators)².

The functions performed by a licenced wastewater operator include the following:

- control flow or pressure of wastewater in a wastewater facility
- disinfect or treatment of wastewater using chemicals and/or through making adjustments to treatment equipment
- monitor gauges, meters and control valves related to disinfection, treatment or collection of wastewater
- start and stop pumps, engines and generators to control and adjust flow and treatment
- open and close valves and gates, whether done manually or by remote control (a non-licenced person can open and close valves for the purpose of ‘exercising’ a valve)

¹ ‘Indirect’ experience does NOT include providing advice to an operator on what chemicals to use or dose, owner or ministry policy, owner or ministry standards, regulation, etc. or setting operating policy or standards.

² To obtain a class I licence, only hands-on experience is acceptable.

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- addition of chemicals to the wastewater
- maintain logs (e.g. shift logs) or other forms of record-keeping related to treatment and collection activities in the facility, make entries into such logs/records including meter and gauge readings
- trenching, storing, sewer rodding, operating lift stations
- other as approved by the Ministry

TO SECURE A NEW OR UPGRADE CERTIFICATE: SUBSTITUTION FOR EXPERIENCE AS AN CLASS II, III, OR IV OPERATOR

Context: O. Reg. 129/04 , Schedule 2, section 8 (1) 2 provides that to secure a wastewater Class II, III, or IV licence, applicants may be permitted to substitute experience as an operator with relevant different experience, specifically:

- experience as an operator in a different type of facility;
- experience in a facility other than as an operator; or
- other relevant qualifications for experience.

There are no substitutions for a class I wastewater treatment or wastewater collection licence.

Ministry Policy:

The following chart reflects the experience the ministry may consider a substitute for experience as a Class II, III, or IV operator.

Substitutions will be recognized for up to 50% of the required operating experience in the type of facility reflecting the licence for which the application is being made.

ORO experience is considered equivalent to OIC experience for the purpose of meeting the certificate experience requirement.

In order to fulfill the requirement to have specific years of OIC experience, the experience substitution must be OIC experience (or ORO experience).

Licence being applied for	Experience Substitution: Class II, III, IV
Wastewater Treatment Licence Upgrade	<p>The following will be accepted as a substitute for working as an operator for 1 year in a wastewater treatment facility:</p> <p>a. working as an operator for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 3 years in the following drinking water subsystems: distribution, distribution and supply, limited surface, and limited groundwater ▪ 3 years in a drinking water treatment subsystem

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 3 years in a wastewater collection facility ▪ 4 years in an industrial wastewater facility <p>b. for persons holding a trade licence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2 years of experience performing the functions of that trade in any drinking water subsystem, or any domestic wastewater facility <p>d. for persons not holding a trade licence but who work as mechanical, electrical or maintenance personnel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 4 years of experience working in that role in any drinking water subsystem or domestic wastewater facility
Wastewater Collection Upgrade	<p>The following will be accepted as a substitute for working as an operator for 1 year in a wastewater collection subsystem:</p> <p>a. working as an operator for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2 years in a wastewater treatment facility ▪ 3 years in a limited surface, and limited groundwater subsystem ▪ 3 years in a drinking water treatment facility ▪ 3 years in a distribution and supply subsystem <p>b. for persons holding a trade licence³:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2 years of experience performing the functions of that trade in any drinking water subsystem, or any domestic wastewater facility <p>d. for persons not holding a trade licence but who work as mechanical, electrical, or maintenance personnel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 4 years of experience working in that role in any drinking water subsystem or domestic wastewater facility

TO SECURE A NEW OR UPGRADE A LICENCE: HOW THE MINISTRY COUNTS EXPERIENCE – WHEN PART-TIME IS CONSIDERED FULL-TIME

Context: Some operators work part-time because the system does not require a full-time operator. Other operators work full-time but only part-time performing operating duties e.g. they also work for the roads department.

Ministry policy:

The ministry considers 1,800 hours per year to equal full-time employment.

³ **Trade licences** include the following: a journeyman or equivalent including a machinist, millwright, electrician, instrument mechanic, electronic specialist, pipe fitter, plumber, welder. This term also includes stationary engineers and licenced engineer technicians or technologists.

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The ministry does not recognize more than one year for one particular type of experience. For example if a person is employed as a full-time operator, and works overtime, they will only receive one year of experience.

A person employed as a full-time operator will be credited one year experience for each year worked, for each type of facility for which they are responsible. Examples:

- a person employed full-time as an operator to operate a wastewater treatment facility or a wastewater collection facility will receive one year of credit toward their wastewater treatment licence or wastewater collection facility licence.
- a person employed full-time as an operator to operate the wastewater treatment facilities and the collection facilities, will receive one year of experience toward their wastewater treatment licence and one year of experience toward their collection licence. In this example, operators will receive full credit for both collection and treatment, only if their exposure to both types of facilities is similar to that of other operators in the system.
- a person employed full-time as an operator to operate the wastewater treatment facilities, the collection facilities, the drinking treatment subsystems, and the drinking water distribution subsystems, will receive one year of experience to be credited towards a wastewater treatment and wastewater collection licence (see above paragraph). For drinking water certificates consult guideline 3.4 entitled: Experience as a Drinking Water Operator.

A person employed part-time as an operator will be credited the percent of full-time employment they worked as an operator.

A person serving as an on-call operator will only be credited experience for the time they actually perform operating functions. No experience will be credited for time spent 'standing by'.

An operator who works part-time as an operator but is responsible for the facility on a full-time basis will receive a one year experience credit for each year worked, for each different type of facility for which they are responsible. For example, if such operator is responsible for both the wastewater treatment and the wastewater collection facilities, they will receive a one year experience credit toward their wastewater treatment licence, and a one year experience credit toward their wastewater collection licence. This exception is limited to facilities requiring operators, who need to be available on a full-time basis but only needs to work on a part-time basis to operate the facility. This exception does not apply if other operators in the facility work on a full-time basis or on a more regular basis.

Minimum number of years: For operators who spend the vast majority of their time performing non-operating functions it might take many years to acquire the necessary operating experience. Thus, the ministry will credit one year experience for five consecutive years performing operating functions on a regular basis throughout each year. This policy is retroactive to January 1, 2000.

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Context: Under O. Reg. 129/04, one of the qualifying criteria for licence renewal is that the operator has worked as an operator in a facility during the past five years, or of performing functions that the Director considers related to those of an operator.

Ministry Policy:

The ministry will accept the following as related experience toward the renewal of the two types of wastewater operator licences:

- a. working as an operator in:
 - one of the five types of drinking water subsystems
 - a wastewater treatment or collection facility (if holding the other)
- b. working as an electrical, mechanical, or maintenance employee in:
 - one of the five types of drinking water subsystems
 - a wastewater treatment or collection facility
- c. working as a supervisor or manager in a drinking subsystem or wastewater facility
- d. time spent training or educating drinking water or wastewater operators on all aspects of system operations and/or equipment maintenance, including educators and technical experts
- e. time spent by a professional engineer, or technical staff employed by the municipality or operating authority, designing, installing, repairing, inspecting, testing and optimizing wastewater treatment or collection equipment
- f. time spent by drinking and wastewater consultants, employed by a recognized consulting company, designing, operating, installing, repairing, testing, optimizing or maintaining drinking or wastewater systems
- g. time spent in the position of a public health inspector or a drinking water inspector
- h. other as approved by the Director, not limited to the following examples: operational work in a an unclassified facility such as an industrial water or industrial wastewater facility, working as a laboratory technician, or in another capacity, conducting operational drinking tests as defined by O. Reg. 248/04, if it can be demonstrated that the person gained knowledge of operating procedures during this time

Note: a person serving as an on-call operator will only be credited experience for the time they actually perform operating functions. No experience will be credited for time spent ‘standing by’.

Approved by:

Date Approved:

Orna Salamon, Director
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